

35275

DK 827Q

ENV. 721

R 698

3845

A LETTER

TO THE

CONGREGATION

OF

ST. MATTHEW'S CHAPEL,

QUEBEC;

IN ANSWER TO THE

REV. DR. PERCY'S LETTER ON

"TRACTARIANISM."

BY THE

REV. HENRY ROE, B.A.,

Curate in charge of St. Matthew's Chapel, and of the St. Lewis and St.

John's Suburbs.

Quebec:

P. SINCLAIR, ST. JOHN STREET;

MONTREAL:—PRINTED BY JOHN LOVELL.

1858.

1 G 3046- 35275

ENV. 721

A LETTER

TO THE

CONGREGATION

OF

ST. MATTHEW'S CHAPEL,

QUEBEC;

IN ANSWER TO THE

REV. DR. PERCY'S LETTER ON

"TRACTARIANISM."

BY THE

REV. HENRY ROE, B.A.,

Curate in charge of St. Matthew's Chapel, and of the St. Lewis and St.
John's Suburbs.

Quebec:

P. SINCLAIR, ST. JOHN STREET;

MONTREAL:—PRINTED BY JOHN LOVELL.

1858.

A. J. L. T. H. R.

CONGREGATION

ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH

STREET

W. L. H. R.

NOV. 10. 1887. L. H. R. ON

"THE ACTUAL STATE"

W. L. H. R. L. H. R.

W. L. H. R. L. H. R. L. H. R.

W. L. H. R.

W. L. H. R.

W. L. H. R. L. H. R. L. H. R.

W. L. H. R. L. H. R. L. H. R.

W. L. H. R.

TO THE CONGREGATION OF ST. MATTHEW'S FREE
CHAPEL, QUEBEC.

MY DEAR BRETHREN,

I feel myself compelled to notice an open, violent and unprovoked attack which has been made upon me, by the Rev. Dr. Percy, in a letter just published, and addressed to the Lord Bishop of Quebec, on the subject of "Tractarianism in the Church of England"; and I think it best to address what I have to say in answer to this attack, to you rather than the Bishop. To him, as my Rector as well as my Bishop, any such defence as this ought, under ordinary circumstances, to be made. But as his Lordship has already investigated the main charges here laid against me, and openly acquitted me of them, all that remains for me to do is, by a plain statement of the facts of the case, to guard your minds against those hurtful impressions which this letter is calculated and evidently intended to produce.

That I am the chief, if not the only individual aimed at, no one, I presume, who reads Dr. Percy's letter, will have any doubt. The frequent reference to "the St. John's and St. Lewis suburbs," as the part of the parish in which the tract he condemns is circulated,—his animadversions upon Dr. Beaven's catechism, linked with the charge of its "surreptitious introduction into the Depository of the Church Society."—the allusions to "unfledged Divines of unfledged universities," all openly declare this. I need not hesitate, therefore, to speak of the letter as a personal attack upon myself.

Dr. Percy professes to write his letter in order to substantiate certain charges of Tractarianism and Romanizing tendencies and practices which he brought forward against some of his brethren of the clergy in a platform speech on the 25th February last. The particular charges made in that speech, however, he, in this letter, only alludes to in a general way, as "having expressed his belief

that *Tractarian principles* were being disseminated by certain individuals in this Diocese." To "*substantiate* the charges then made, to *establish* the allegations offered," he passes them by in silence. To prove me a "modern innovator, an introducer of Oxford novelties," he brings up a tract written nearly 200 years ago, and circulated by the Society that published it ever since! This is certainly a strange mode of vindicating his truthfulness. Why then does he adopt it? Evidently because he knows his former charges to be groundless; and not having the manliness openly to acknowledge his error, he hopes to cover his retreat from the old ground with the brisk fire he opens upon the new enemy, and that, in the dust and noise he excites about it, his former libel will escape detection.

This example I must beg to decline copying; and before passing on to examine his new grievance, I must say a few words about the original attack itself.

Dr. Percy is reported to have said, (*Mercury* of 27th February, 1858; and the report of the speech was evidently furnished to the paper, and is therefore *authentic*):—

"But after all, he believed that the ground of opposition offered by some was, not that it (the Colonial Church and School Society) was not in their estimation a Church Society; but, to adopt the conventional term of the day, an Evangelical Society. It would not tolerate their longings for a closer propinquity with Rome, their lighted candles, their antependiums, their altar flowers, their altar coverings of different hues for different vigils, fasts and festivals, to use John Milton's words, "black, white and grey, with all their trumpery." It relished not the Latin prayers, the crossing, the genuflexions, the auricular confession inculcated in the calendars for this year, most shamelessly denominated the "Churchman's diary"; but which, with greater regard to truth, might have been styled the "Romanizer's ritual." It abhorred the whole Tractarian system, that mongrel Popery, which some would substitute for our glorious Protestantism, for the faith and worship of the Church of England. It loathed in members of that Church the superstition which, while it assumed to elevate, would sink into a mummery the most precious Sacrament of the God and

Saviour. These things it rejected and abhorred. These were the reasons (as he well believed) which caused it to be looked upon with disfavour and ill-will by the Tractarian and by the Romanizing Churchman."

Here, then, the charges are tolerably distinct,—that some of the Clergy in this Diocese decline supporting the Colonial Church and School Society, because it "will not tolerate their lighted candles and antependiums, and altar flowers, and altar coverings of different hues for the different vigils, fasts and festivals," and because, especially, it does not "relish the Churchman's diary, with its Latin prayers and crossing, and genuflexions, and auricular confession"—which, of course, we are to understand that they use. This was the statement of the speech.

Now either Dr. Percy knew the principles, views and practices of those his brethren of the Clergy, or he did not. If he knew nothing at all about them, then how criminal were the inventions of his speech! If he did know them, then he knew he was uttering an unmixed calumny; for among the Clergy who decline supporting the Colonial Church and School Society, and who object to its being forced by means of the Church Society into a quasi-official connexion with the Diocese—there is not, Dr. P. well knows, a single one to whom any part of his charges can be made to apply with any degree of fairness. Of the five Clergy who had offended Dr. Percy and his friends a few days before, by voting against a clause of his Report laudatory of the Colonial Church and School Society, and who, it is well known, were the parties aimed at in that speech, four live here in town, and have been among you a sufficient length of time for it to be known if they had any "insane desire for the revival of popish practices, and the introduction of frivolous novelties." Of them you are all as good judges as Dr. Percy. And the fifth Clergyman is the last man to whom even Dr. Percy would apply his own speech.

This part of his charge is so notoriously and extravagantly unfounded, that one is lost in amazement he did not select a more reasonable ground of attack; and to me the most surprising part of all Dr. Percy's late proceedings is, that he should have hit upon charges which are so manifest an outrage upon the understanding and the senses of every reasonable Churchman.

The saddest part of this most unhappy speech is that respecting *the Churchman's Diary*. At a large meeting of a Committee of the Church Society, held a few days before, Dr. Percy brought this subject up, and asserted that this Diary was in use in the Diocese. Out of the five Clergy referred to above, three were present and at once declared that they *had never even seen the book*.* And when Dr. P. was pressed to name the Clergy who used it, it came out that he only knew of *one Clergyman* who possessed a copy. And yet, *a few days after this*, he brings up the charge again in a public speech, and sends it out to the world, through the press, to scatter its poison all over the country, and to be a seed of distrust and alarm to the whole Church! But the most heart-sickening part of this transaction remains behind yet. *At the very moment* that he was accusing his brethren—who did not side with this new Society—of Tractarianism, BECAUSE of their relish for “the Churchman's diary,” he *knew* that *not one* of the clergy who objected to the Society had *ever seen* a copy of that work; he *knew* or, at least, *had the best reason to believe*, that *the only Clergyman* in the Diocese who possessed, or *had ever seen* a copy, was his own most intimate friend and companion, who was sitting on that very platform by his side TO ADVOCATE (as he did advocate and very ably) *the cause of the Colonial Church and School Society!!*

After you have read this, my brethren, you will not be surprised at Dr. Percy's strange silence about the charges and allegations which his letter is professedly published to substantiate.

I now pass on to the letter itself, the main body of which is taken up with a review of one of the Christian Knowledge Society tracts, “Nelson on the Ember Days at the Four Seasons.”

Out of this tract, with a spirit, an energy of purpose, a cleverness and a wit,—which might have been better employed in a more worthy cause,—and I must add with an unscrupulousness in the perversion of the author's meaning, and a reckless unfairness in every part which shock and astonish me,—he attempts to fasten

* The other two, and every other Clergyman I have seen since have told me the same thing, that they had *never even seen* the book referred to.

on Robert Nelson the charge of doctrinal unsoundness, and through him Romanizing sentiments and tendencies upon me.

Well then, one thing is gained to begin with; you may now come to a pretty clear knowledge of the state of the whole Diocese, and the danger it is in from Romanizing tendencies in the Clergy. "The laity (Dr. P. assures us) are thoroughly sound, and to a man opposed to Oxford novelties." "There is nought of unsoundness" (he pronounces) "in the Clergy as a body"; and of the few tainted ones, *I am the worst. I am the greatest Romaniser* in the Diocese. If you wish to know how much Tractarianism and sympathy with Rome there is in the Diocese, you have nothing to do but to step into the "St. Lewis and St. John's suburbs," and there you have it all concentrated in the doings and sayings of my unfortunate self! I accept the charge. I thank Dr. Percy for fastening it here. I believe it to be true. I am persuaded that there is not a single Clergyman in the Diocese who is more Romanistic in his doings, feelings, and tendencies (always excepting Dr. P. and his party,—who are in the most effectual manner, playing into the hands of Rome) than I am myself. How alarming, then, is the danger we are in from "Tractarianism in the Church of England," in this Diocese, you, my dear brethren, who have seen my life and conversation, have been listening to my teaching and conversing familiarly with me in private for now more than three years, may judge.

With respect to the Tract on the Ember Seasons, he finds a two-fold ground of blame:—1st. That "its object, or, at least, its tendency, is to exalt unduly the importance of external ordinances, and to magnify, beyond all reasonable bounds, the dignity of the clerical order," and that it is full of "Romish figments and most unscriptural falsehoods." And 2nd. That it is "unprofitable reading for the illiterate poor of these suburbs, for the ungodly and the sinner; a work not calculated to be instrumental in winning souls to Christ, and in turning them from darkness to light"; that its subject matter is "worthless husks for your hungry souls,"—nay, that in giving it to you, I give you "a stone for bread, and instead of fish a serpent."

This, my brethren,—let me notice in passing,—is really an attempt to create a wide-spread suspicion of the soundness of the publications of the noble and venerable Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Dr. P.'s object in selecting an S. P. C. K. Tract is evident. He thinks, with a single sweep of his pen, to wreak his own vengeance upon me and to please those who have long been striving to bring this great Society into odium.

Into the defence of the venerable Society, or of this most excellent Tract, I do not enter. In the case of either, it would be presumptuous, it would be traitorous in me to do so. It would be an insult to the feelings and understanding of every sound and intelligent Churchman to begin now to vindicate, against such an attack as this, the venerated, the world-wide honoured name of ROBERT NELSON.

ROBERT NELSON'S FESTIVALS AND FASTS!

As I read the name in the letter I paused in unfeigned astonishment, and as I write it now I can scarcely believe my senses. Is this the work the Rev. Dr. Percy, the Secretary of the Church Society of the Diocese of Quebec, and Cathedral lecturer, selects that he may fasten upon those who circulate it the brand of Romanizing? ROBERT NELSON, the gentle, the learned, the liberal, the type of everything that is noble and saintly in a layman, of everything that is true-hearted and loyal in a son of the Church of England, among all her many glorious sons, is to-day found to be "*an old superstitious non-juror!*" Surely, Dr. Percy supposed in those whom he hoped to catch by his letter a depth of ignorance to which not many in Quebec are yet sunk.

One benefit, my dear brethren, I trust and hope, may flow from this shameful attack upon his memory, that those of you who are as yet unacquainted with his life and writings, will be stimulated to study both the one and the other.

If it were asked, to what layman since the days of the Reformation does the Church of England stand most deeply indebted?—with scarcely a dissenting voice the whole Church would answer, To ROBERT NELSON. His chief honour are his good and pious works, for the glory of God, the edification of

His Church and the conversion of the world, to which he devoted his fortune, his time, his fine talents and all his heart. He was one of the most prominent of the founders of the two great Missionary Societies which have nourished the Church in this Diocese from its infancy. But he is best known by that most useful work, four chapters of which form the Tract in question,—his *Companion to the Festivals and Fasts*,—a prodigy of learning, genius and piety,—a work which has gone through numberless editions* at home, has been translated into various foreign languages, and is now and has been ever since its publication in as familiar use as household words, among all classes and parties of the Church of England wherever throughout the world she has a foothold. From this book it is that Dr. Percy “drags forth *unwholesome and erroneous doctrines FROM THEIR DARKNESS into the light of day, that they may be known and condemned and shunned by the true children of the Church*”!!! And is it then come to this! The pupil, the companion, the biographer of Bull, that giant defender of the faith against heresy and Popery,—the bosom friend of Tillotson, who died in Nelson’s arms,—our Church’s pride and glory for his masterly and commanding defence of her against Bossuet, Rome’s greatest champion,—is held up to the hatred and scorn of the Canadian Church by one of her own dignified Clergy, as an unsound Protestant in his life, and a teacher of Romish figments in his writings!

Treated as the Tract has been in this unhappy letter, with such unfairness, dishonesty and bad temper, with sneers and insinuations, it would be easy to prove any book, the Prayer book, nay, the blessed Bible itself, unsound and heretical.

Let me briefly point out a few instances of this kind.

Nelson “is seduced” says Dr. P. (p. 7, 8) “into an unholy effort to elevate (the Festivals) to the same level of sanctity with the Lord’s Day, to rank the institutions of man high as the ordinances of the Lord.” Now pause and think, *think*, don’t be carried away with *sound*, but think. Do Nelson’s words

* The S. P. O. K. edition of 1836, was the 26th edition.

convey the meaning Dr. P. puts upon them? Certainly not. He says nothing here of the comparative *sanctity* or *rank* of the Lord's Day and Festivals; he is merely speaking of the *manner* of their *observance*; and he says, it is *probable* it was the intention of the compilers of the Liturgy that they should be *observed* after the same *manner*, viz.: "with rest from ordinary labour, as well as with prayers and thanksgivings." In the first two chapters of the work, (and surely Dr. P. ought to have examined those chapters!) the distinction between them in point of authority, sanctity and rank, is clearly and strongly marked, and the "higher honor" is given (not to the *Sabbath Day*, for Christians do not observe that day, but) to the *Lord's Day*.

Hooker, whom Dr. P. mentions with honour, and from whom Nelson evidently borrowed his thoughts and arguments on this point, (and indeed every divine who has written on the subject,) must be included in Dr. Percy's censure, for he takes the same ground and defends it at great length, "against the Puritans of his day."

"Festival solemnity (says Hooker) is the due mixture of these three elements, praise, bounty and rest.***Touching those Festival days, *** which we now observe **** "what remaineth but to keep them throughout all generations holy, severed by manifest notes of difference from other times, adorned with that which most may betoken true, virtuous and celestial joy? To which intent, *because surcease from labour is necessary*, ***** so the voluntary scandalous contempt of that *rest from labour* where-with God is served, we cannot too severely correct and bridle."

But it is plain to common sense that we cannot observe the Festivals as our Church appoints, by going to public worship, without resting, more or less, from ordinary labours.

But again:—In neither the offices for Baptism or Confirmation, (to which Nelson refers), says Dr. P., "is *fasting* once mentioned." It could scarcely be expected that *Infants* should prepare themselves for baptism by fasting; but if the Dr. had looked into the office for *Adult* Baptism, he would have found the direction Nelson refers to in the *first rubric*.

Again, Dr. P. (p. 11) quotes Nelson as follows:—"Confirmation conveys Divine grace to encounter our spiritual enemies, and to enable us to perform what we undertake." "Indeed (cries Dr. Percy) Confirmation *conveys* divine grace, *enables* us to encounter our special enemies, and to perform what we undertake!" But Nelson says not that *Confirmation* enables, but that "*divine grace*," conveyed in Confirmation, "*enables* us."

"If this be indeed the case, (proceeds Dr. P.,) then is the Romish doctrine of the *opus operatum* true." Now *what* is the doctrine of the *opus operatum*? It is this; that grace is so *inseparably* tied to the reception of the sacraments that *they themselves contain and convey grace, independently of the faith of the receiver*. Does Nelson teach that Confirmation conveys grace *independently of the faith of the receiver*? No, for Dr. P. himself quotes him as saying, that "the laying on of hands and authoritative prayer conveys to such persons who *sincerely* renew their baptismal vow a *proportionable* degree of God's grace and Holy Spirit," "and these graces are obtained by those who are *qualified* "to receive them."

"*Qualified* to receive them,"—"the Romish grace *de congruo*, I presume," Dr. P. puts in parenthetically. This is most lamentably dishonest, when in the 3rd following question on the *very next page*, Nelson asks, "what *qualifications* are necessary for the candidates of this sacred ordinance," and explains them to be that they be thoroughly instructed, and prepare themselves by prayer, fasting and good resolutions. The Romish grace *de congruo* is, that 'good works done before the grace of God, merit reward at His hands.' What this has to do here, it is hard to see.

But in this case, again, Nelson's statements are taken (as any one may see who compares the two) from Dr. P.'s own authority, the judicious HOOKER.

Dr. Percy 'denounces' the statement, that "Our Spiritual life is maintained by the Holy Eucharist," 'as a Romish figment and a most unscriptural falsehood.' And yet in the Prayer Book it is said that "CHRIST is given to be our spiritual food and sustenance in that Holy Sacrament"; and that those who

receive worthily, "dwell in Christ and Christ in them—are *one with Christ and Christ with them.*" Is it not by this union with Christ that the life of our Souls is *sustained*? If the learned Dr. had 'refreshed his memory' a little with the homily on the Lord's Supper, and had glanced at the writings of *Hooker*, *Cranmer*, *Latimer*, *Ridley*, *Jewell*, *Pearson*, and our other great Divines, (or indeed, of *Calvin* and the *Westminster Confession*), he would have found they all come under this same reckless and sweeping condemnation of teaching 'Romish figments and unscriptural falsehoods.'

In the first part of the Homily of the Sacrament we read, "in the Lord's Supper there is the communion of the body and blood of the Lord, *whereby our souls live to Eternal life.*"

Hooker says (Lib. V. 57) "The grace which we have by the Holy Eucharist doth not begin *but continue life.*"

Cranmer, in his examination before *Queen Mary's* commissioners, says :* "By Christ's passion we are filled at His table, and whose blood; we receiving out of His holy side, *do live for ever.*"

Ridley says,† "He that eateth and drinketh worthily *eateth life and drinketh life.*"

But enough and more than enough.

Again :—Dr. P. quotes *Nelson* as saying that "by the execution of the priest's office, the pardon of our sins is signed and sealed to us," and comments on it thus : "what the meaning of this may be, I do not pretend to understand : and in the hope of an explanation being offered, pause for a reply." This is somewhat astounding, when the very next words in *Nelson* are, "*For by the administration of the sacraments* are the benefits of Christ's sacrifice really conveyed to all worthy receivers." This is *Nelson's* explanation, and the words "the meaning of which" Dr. P. "pretends not to understand," are simply a quotation from the 27th Article ("of Baptism.") "The promises of the *forgiveness of sin* are (in it) *visibly signed and sealed.*"

* *Fox's Book of Martyrs*, p. 690, 691. *Seymour's* edition.

† *Fox*, p. 696.

Five whole pages of the letter are taken up with proving that the Church of England does not believe in *judicial* absolution by a priest. But who ever said she did? Not Nelson, for his words are simply quoted (as Dr. P. allows) from the Communion Service; certainly not I, nor any one else in the Church of England that I ever heard of. Hooker's excellent statement—quoted, in part, by Dr. Percy—embodies the highest view held and taught, so far as I know, by any of our clergy.

But what would any one gather from Dr. Percy spending so much of his strength in disproving the power of judicial absolution in the ministry, but that I and others embrace the Romish view? Is this honest—is it candid—is it the part of Christian charity—of brotherly love?

Worst of all is the meaning Dr. P. puts upon Nelson's words, p. 17, 18, that "no one *can be* turned from darkness to light except by a priest, and that Nelson will not allow the most passing allusion to the fact that sinners may be converted *through lay agency, or through the study of the Word.*" Why did not Dr. Percy look into Nelson's chapter on the Word of God,* in which he calls those holy oracles "*the power of God unto Salvation*"? And surely Dr. P. must have forgotten, when he was writing this, that Nelson was himself a layman, and that his *whole life was devoted* to promoting the salvation of his fellow men. Though it is strange, when, in the preface to this book,—which Dr. P. seems to have examined,—Nelson speaks of the religious societies of laymen, of which he was a member, as united together "to promote their own salvation *as well as that of their neighbours.*"

But I willingly turn from this sickening exposure, to something else.

I find myself overwhelmed with ridicule for giving such a tract as this,—so full of curious learning, of authorities from the old fathers and even from the pagan classics,—"*into the hands of the illiterate poor*" of these suburbs.

The tract is composed of four chapters, taken without alteration or abridgement out of the original work. That work was

* See Index to Nelson, under "Word of God."

intended for the learned as well as the unlearned, and is so skillfully framed as to be attractive and useful to both.

Nothing could be more unfair than Dr. Percy's treatment of the learning of this book. It is pretty much the same as if one were to bring together into one view the genealogies in Genesis, Chronicles, St. Matthew and St. Luke,—together with Moses' account of the Dukes of Edom, several chapters of his minute directions about the building of the Tabernacle, and some of the obscure passages from the Prophets and the Revelation,—and cry in triumph, "There! see what a book the Bible is! What an unprofitable work to put into the hands of the illiterate poor! What husks for hungry souls!" Would this be fair? And yet this is exactly the way Dr. Percy has treated Nelson.

It is quite true that the more learned parts of the tract are not so suitable for some of you, my brethren; but *nine-tenths* of the tract are level to the apprehension of any man of common understanding, and contain valuable and solid instruction which the most illiterate might profit by. I hope that no one of you, my brethren, who can read English, considers himself so illiterate as to be incapable of understanding what is the office and work of a bishop, a priest, a deacon, or even of an arch-deacon in the church of God,—no one so thoughtless as to imagine it is a matter of no concern to him to know anything about the constitution, and authority, and duties, and benefits of the Christian ministry. You cannot intelligently use your prayer-books, you cannot intelligently repeat the Creed, you are liable constantly to be drawn away into schism and many errors, if you know nothing of these things. Dr. Percy seems to me to under-rate the intellectual capacity of "the illiterate poor of these suburbs," when, looking down upon you from the sublime pinnacle of his own lofty and commanding genius and gigantic learning, he pronounces you incapable of deriving any advantage from the reading of this tract. "All Scripture is profitable," and whatsoever things are written therein, are written for the instruction of poor and rich, learned and unlearned alike. The nature, office and orders of the Christian ministry,—the subjects treated of in this tract,—are declared by our church (Preface to the Ordinal)

to be revealed in Holy Scripture, and "evident unto all men who diligently read the Word of God." How ungrateful, how dishonouring to Christ to treat with proud disdain, as worthless husks, scriptural instruction about that ministry, which the good Shepherd, in his immeasurable love, gave for the feeding, the healing and the salvation of his flock!

But besides this important instruction,—which I am persuaded was never more necessary than it is now, when men have literally "*heaped to themselves teachers*,"—instruction, the wide spread diffusion of which would tend most materially to what is sadly wanting in Quebec, the revival of a higher and better state of religion, among both clergy and laity, than that with which we are now contented,—besides this, there are many pious and practical lessons scattered through the tract; and, what is more, many beautiful and holy prayers, which perhaps you would seek in vain any where else;—prayers, which, if they were more used in Robert Nelson's spirit of faith and love, we should see more of Robert Nelson's good and pious works, and less of such miserable exhibitions of our weakness and disunion as are furnished to the scorn and derision of the Romanist, the dissenter and the infidel by Dr. Percy's most ill-judged letter.

If indeed,—as any one would naturally conclude from Dr. P.'s letter,—I fed your souls with nothing else but learned disquisitions on the Christian ministry, if this were all of the Bread of Life I dispensed to you, then indeed his severest censure would be richly deserved. But the opposite of this is true; I find, in looking back, cause to blame myself for not having given you more instruction, (as I never did, I fear, even once from the pulpit) on this and kindred subjects. In my zeal to speak of "the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ," I have neglected to instruct you in the nature and constitution of "the Kingdom of God," (Acts 28, 31). If it should please God to bring me back among you again, I hope to correct this error.

At the four Ember seasons you know it is my custom, to urge seriously upon you, in a few words, if not in a set discourse, your duty and privilege to pray for the Christian ministry. I have wished this to be followed up with a suitable tract

at these reasons, and Nelson's is the only one I could find on the subject, and in many respects there could not be a better. Accordingly it has been circulated among you by the ladies who from love to Christ and His brethren are engaged in the blessed work of visiting (where they are willingly received) their fellow-Christians, as friends, with Christian sympathy, and to help to do them good. It may be that a copy of this tract was left in a house (though how different a thing this is from Dr. Percy's charge!) where there was "an aged and dying sinner." But I have such confidence in the judgment and discretion of those excellent ladies,—whom not only I thank but the whole church,—that I am sure the tracts they select for each individual case are such as are good to the use of edifying.

Dr. Percy objects that this Tract is "not calculated to prove instrumental in winning souls to Christ, in turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, nor profitable for the enlightening of the ungodly and the sinner."

But does Dr. Percy suppose there are none except such persons in these suburbs?—no pious and intelligent Christians, whose faith and love might be nourished and strengthened by such a tract as this? None among the nearly two hundred communicants of our Chapel, who might profitably spend an hour, four times a year, in reading over this tract? Yes, there are many, even among those whom Dr. Percy is pleased to call "the illiterate poor of the suburbs," who are rich in faith, whose minds and understandings are expanded and purified by the enlightening power of true religion, who are quite as capable of understanding and just as likely to profit by this excellent tract as the richest in Quebec. There are many among our poor who read large treatises on controverted subjects, and who, by reason of their constant intercourse with Romanists and Dissenters, need to be well armed against their attacks upon the doctrines and polity of our Church. In no one of the sects are the intelligent poor treated as Dr. P. would have us treat our poor. They are looked upon as Christian brethren, and are carefully grounded in the principles and reasons of their church discipline and their faith. For such was this tract intended, not for the ungodly and the sinner; and such might read

it through and understand it all,—even the Latin quotations, with the English translation Nelson everywhere appends,—to their establishment in the faith, and to the edification of their souls.

The tracts we circulate among you, which are all those of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge,—tracts which emphatically convey the mind of the Church of England,—are with very few exceptions, upon practical religion, such as you must feel, do your souls good. They feed you, not with worthless husks, but “with the sincere milk of the word.” God forbid, my brethren, that unreasonable and wicked men should succeed in sowing in your minds distrust of those excellent tracts. I cannot express the indignation I feel at the attempt. You have the Word of God in your hands, compare the tracts, as I constantly urge upon you that it is your *duty* to compare our teaching with that Blessed Book. I know and am persuaded in my heart that the more carefully and searchingly you examine them in the light of that Holy Word, the more thoroughly convinced you will be of their perfect harmony with it.

I come now to the last point in Dr. Percy’s letter,—the objections taken to Dr. Beaven’s *Help to Catechising*, and the grave charge that I “surreptitiously introduced” that work into the Depository of the Church Society.

This charge, coming from a brother,—almost a father in the ministry,—I scarcely know how to speak of. I approach it with pain and heartfelt sorrow. How surprised, then, must you be my brethren, to be told that this same crime was publicly laid to my charge by Dr. Percy at the meeting of the committee of the Church Society referred to above; and that, after hearing my explanation, the Bishop at once fully acquitted me of having *insidiously* (*that* was the word then used) introduced the book, as a means of propagating my own peculiar opinions into the Depository of the Church Society.* Nay, so evidently satisfactory was

* The facts of the case are these :—

I sent to New York for 50 copies of *Beaven’s Help* for my confirmation class. When they came, I told the class how I had brought them in, and that they might either have them gratis, or pay for them as they

my explanation to the meeting that Dr. Percy's own son-in-law, Lieut. Ashe, came forward and expressed the hope that Dr. Percy would withdraw the epithet "*insidious*." This he petulantly refused to do, which one could forgive, as a momentary outbreak of anger and mortification. But when, *after all this*, he repeats the charge in a widely circulated printed letter, he displays an insatiable desire to injure me which is almost incredible. I do most sincerely grieve to be obliged to expose these things; but when charges so hurtful, nay, blasting to my moral character for honesty, are published to the world, the duty I owe to myself, to my family, to you, my brethren, and to the church at large, compels me as publicly to refute them.

The Catechism in question Dr. P. speaks of as "somewhat notorious," and "containing many curious, and some unseemly things," and he asserts that it is "*rejected*" by a large section of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States *as unsound in doctrine*."

This last statement is the only part of the above that is of any consequence. That Dr. B's catechism, and the society which pub-

pleased. To save myself the trouble of giving them out, I gave 25 copies, and afterward six copies more, to Miss Wood, the keeper of the Depository, with careful instructions to sell them *to none but the members of my own class*. They were all gone in a few days, as the class numbered nearly ninety persons. For many weeks, if not months, before Dr. Percy brought up the matter in the Depository Committee, there was not a single copy of the book in the Depository. This is the whole history of my "*insidious and surreptitious introduction of Beaven's Catechism into the Depository of the Church Society*,"—a *private arrangement* between Miss Wood and myself, of which *my whole class were beforehand fully aware*. And all this was *fully explained* at the meeting of the Depository Committee, when Dr. P. first brought the matter up! The strangest point is, that another of our city clergy had *previously* made a similar use of the Depository, and Hymn books, imported by him, were in the Depository *at the time I gave the Catechism to Miss Wood*, (and remained there long after my 31 copies of Beaven were sold) and exhibited for sale in the window, and that without any restriction as to whom they were to be sold to. And yet no fault was ever found with him. But fortunately for my friend the Hymn books were those of the REV. CANON BANCROFT!

lishes it, have the confidence of the great mass of moderate men, and even of those called *Evangelical men* in the American Church, documents for some time past in my possession, and extracts from which I have published in *The Quebec Gazette* of the 5th inst., will abundantly satisfy every reasonable man.

As I said before of the tract, so I repeat of this catechism,—it would be a word of supererogation for me to write in defence of either. The society Dr. Percy here assails, unquestionably has the confidence of all but an extreme section of the American Church, as the *Christian Knowledge Society* has of the Church of England. If I sin in using these publications, I sin in good company.

For myself, I have been using this little work in the instruction of youth for now at least eight years that I can distinctly remember. With its aid I prepared my candidates for confirmation here in 1855, and in Megantic in 1852 and 1853. And after this experience, I think it an excellent work, and better adapted to this purpose than any other I know. It has been condemned by some here, among other things, of *puerility*, as abounding in silly questions. But I take leave to say that no one who has not large experience in the practice of catechising ought to consider himself a competent judge of what is a puerile and needless question. The fact that this book has been republished in several editions of many thousand copies by two separate houses in New York,* as well as that several editions of it have been issued in the Old Country, proves it to be a valuable book. I do not say I agree with every word in it. To challenge such agreement is the

* The two separate editions I refer to are that of the P. E. S. S. Union, and that by Dr. H. Anthon. This latter is claimed (by Dr. A. and the Episcopal Recorder) to be so much altered from Beaven's as to be substantially a new work, especially in those parts which treat of the ministry and the sacraments. What, then, was my surprise, on carefully comparing the two with a brother clergyman, allowed to be an *Evangelical* man, to find *Anthon* quite as strong and as sound on these points as *Beaven*! Those among us who object to *Beaven's Help*, would certainly consider Dr. H. Anthon as a Tractarian. Let my readers also remember that the edition of *Beaven* I and others use is approved by Dr. Lewis of Brooklyn, Dr. Clarke of Connecticut, and other as eminent *Evangelical* divines as the American Church possesses.

prerogative of inspiration alone. As a work of art, I see blemishes in it, and, especially in some parts, it might, I think, be very materially improved. From some of Dr. Beaven's explanations of words, definitions of theological terms, expositions and applications of texts, I dissent.* But the book taken as a whole I think a safe and useful manual to put into teachers' and children's hands. And in its *doctrinal teaching in all important points*, I concur with all my heart, and by it I am content to stand or fall.

One word more and I have done. I am accused of being a "modern innovator," of striving "to introduce Oxford novelties and to revive exploded superstitions,"—of "an insane desire for the revival of practices long obsolete,"—of a "childish passion for the inculcation of exaggerated views of things in themselves indifferent," and of having thus "excited divisions, given origin to doubts, and stirred up strife in the congregation of the Lord." These are grave charges,—I challenge the world to fix one of them upon me,—to point out a single instance, in my teaching or my doings in which I have stepped out of the line of honest or even moderate churchmanship, or have gone beyond or beside the teaching of the Prayer Book, or the unanimous voice of our great divines. I do not say that I have been as active and as faithful in my pastoral labours among you as I ought to have been. No, I wish I could say so. The prayer book to which (in common with Dr. Percy) I have so solemnly declared my "unfeigned assent and consent," I confess, I thoroughly believe and love, and to teach and carry out the system of religion laid down in it, is the object of my life. But an innovator in doctrine, or an introducer of novelties in ritual matters, I am not and by the grace of God, I never will be. A superstitious fondness for excessive ritualism and multiplied and gaudy ceremonies, I hold in as real contempt as the Rev. Dr. Percy. My life is the best proof of this. What innovation have I brought in here? You know that

* Of course no skilful catechist would confine himself to the letter of this or any other manual, and, in the case of a book like this which cannot have any authority but is merely used for convenience, he would carefully explain anything he thought a mistake or erroneous as he went along.

I have carried on the services in this chapel exactly as I found them, introducing no change whatever. Was it otherwise in my country mission? There I was not dogged by prying and suspicious eyes; and being then a younger man, I was more likely, in the warmth of youthful zeal, to give prominence to any "exaggerated views" of which I might be possessed. Did I ever indulge there in any of these vagaries? No, I left the churches exactly as I found them, without altering a single thing. My time was very differently spent there (as it has been here) from what any one would gather from Dr. Percy's letter. Why, then, am I charged with an 'insane desire for the revival of practices long obsolete'? Why,—except to undermine, if possible, your confidence in me, or, if that cannot be effected, to brand my character in the estimation of those who have no opportunity of knowing me.

I am accused of having "excited divisions, given origin to doubts and stirred up strife". Is it so? Where are the 'strife, divisions and doubts' among us? I came among you under trying circumstances, at a time of 'strife, divisions and doubts.' Have I not made peace? I have now been among you more than three years. You have seen me, not in Church only, but in your own houses,—in your joy and your sorrow, in the unbroken quiet of your every day life, in your times of difficulty and poverty, and in your more serious trials of the shorter or more lingering sickness of those dear to you. You know if, either in the pulpit or in our more unrestrained private and social intercourse, I have taken up my time and yours with speaking of "altar cloths, candles, altar flowers," or any such like themes. You know I have been in earnest in speaking to you, in public and in private about your souls and sin, the love of Christ, your duty to Him, and the way to grow like Him. You know, many of you, whether to the dying Christian I ever offered a tract on the dignity of the Christian Ministry. I had more awful, more necessary topics for that dread hour! To you I can appeal, and to my former flock as witnesses to the utter falsehood of these wicked charges. May God, for Christ sake, forgive those who have invented and circulated them and change their hearts!

My dear Brethren, the writing of this letter has been to me a very painful duty. And especially must I regret that I have been obliged to speak, as I have here spoken, of one who ought to command the reverence and love of us all. But such a time as this,—when a few extreme men, here among us, reckless of the nature of the means they use, are moving heaven and earth to excite the distrust and fears of Christian people in the Church towards their pastors, and to shake the very foundations of their mutual confidence,—when the grossest and most outrageous calumnies, nay, often calumnies the most whimsical and absurd, are circulated and greedily believed,—when the perfect concord this whole Diocese has always enjoyed (with the exception of the troubles created here in Quebec from time immemorial by a little but busy party) has now been so rudely broken in upon by Dr Percy's incendiary letter, endorsing as it does his still more violent speech,—this is no time cowardly to hold one's peace. As for myself, I have long been the victim of such calumnies as these busily whispered about, destitute though they are of even the shadow of a foundation. But these things move me not I am strong in the sense of my own integrity, of the invincible power of Truth, of the immoveable foundations of the Catholic faith on which I stand, and of the majesty and faithfulness of that God, who loves the Church He purchased with own blood. He sitteth above the water floods; and though they rage and swell, He remaineth a King for ever. In the greatest troubles He shall give the strength of patience to His people, and by the means of those troubles, He will work out finally for His Church the blessing of PEACE. May he hasten it here amongst us in His time!

Meanwhile, I cannot but thank and praise God that this pressure from without has exercised no apparent evil influence upon you, my dear Brethren, nor, so far as I can see, interrupted, even for a moment the confidence, respect and affection with which you have ever received me. Our little chapel is full. The congregation that assembles there is remarkable,—though I say it—for its quiet, orderly, devout and reverential demeanour, outward signs, as I trust, of the growing devotion of your hearts and minds to

GOD. The earnest and general responding, the hearty congregational singing, the fixed and eager attention to the word of God both read and preached, the intelligent part you take in the occasional offices, the growing attendance upon the week-day service, and, above all, the very large and increasing number of communicants, all these are signs, I rejoice to think, of God's blessing upon the faithful teaching of His own truth. I might speak of the prosperous condition of the Sunday School, of the zealous but quiet and unobtrusive labours of our District visitors—but I forbear. If I have "become a fool in boasting," may I not say to the disturbers of our peace, with St. Paul, "Ye have compelled me!" Now that I am on the point of parting with you for a short period,—though it may be for ever on earth,—perhaps I shall the more readily be excused for writing thus of myself. Let us "stand fast," my dear friends, "in one mind, with one spirit, striving together for the faith of the Gospel;" and in doing so, let us "endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

Your faithful and affectionate

Friend and Pastor,

HENRY ROE.

QUEBEC, 10th May, 1858.